

Title: **Bedford, Lenox among 200 clinics offering telemedicine**
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DES MOINES — The week of May 10-16 recognizes National Hospital Week throughout the country. This year, Iowa has reason to celebrate. Because of a partnership between the Iowa Hospital Association and Iowa Communications Network, 200 hospitals and clinics now offer telemedicine services via high speed broadband connectivity.

Earlier this year, CHI Health Mercy Corning Hospital's satellite Alegent clinics in Bedford and Lenox became the 199th and 200th health care locations to connect to Iowa's Rural Health Communications Program (IRHCP). The IRHCP is a joint effort between 86 Iowa rural and urban hospitals, two South Dakota hospitals and the Iowa Communications Network with the pur-

pose of connecting willing Iowa health care facilities and hospitals in surrounding states to a dedicated fiber network using existing ICN infrastructure.

The clinics in Bedford and Lenox join a growing number of rural hospitals and clinics now able to provide telemedicine services to patients who previously only had access to primary care

services.

"We have been in these communities providing primary care for many years but we can now look at expanding what services we provide by using telemedicine and other technologies," said Debra Goldsmith, president, Regional Hospital, Mercy Corning.

Because of telemedicine, hospitals and clinics with

broadband accessibility are now able to remotely offer specialty services including cardiac care, dermatology, psychology and access to radiologists. These are among the specialties that may be offered by health care officials in other parts of the state and delivered to the hospital or clinic via high-speed broadband connection.